

NEWS RELEASE

THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY

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Bring Marine and FBI killers to justice, demands outraged Libertarian Party

WASHINGTON, DC — It's now legal for Marines to use M-16 assault rifles to kill high school students and for FBI sharpshooters to gun down mothers holding their infant daughters — without worrying about any criminal penalties, the Libertarian Party charged today.

"In America today, your innocence is no guarantee that you won't be killed by your own government," said the party's national chairman, Steve Dasbach.

Dasbach's comments were part of an outpouring of outrage that followed the decision late last week by a grand jury in Texas not to prosecute a Marine corporal who shot dead an 18-year-old high school student in Texas, and by the Justice Department not to file charges against four FBI agents involved in the killing of Vicki Weaver at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, in 1992.

■ In Redford, Texas, Esequiel Hernandez, Jr. was gunned down by a four-man squad of U.S. Marines in May as he grazed his herd of 45 goats on his family's farm. The grand jury ruled that the Marines — who were on a covert drug surveillance mission along the Mexican border — were acting in self-defense when they shot the "shy, hard-working" high school student.

"This grand jury has sent a deadly message: Anything goes in the War on Drugs," said Dasbach. "This war has become a genuine military shooting war — against American citizens."

■ The case involving the FBI dates back to the shoot-out at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, between the FBI and white separatist Randy Weaver in 1992, in which an FBI sharpshooter killed Vicki Weaver as she stood in her mountain cabin, holding her 11-month-old daughter in her arms.

The Justice Department ruled last week that it would not bring criminal charges against four senior FBI officials involved in the shooting, and ruled that the FBI gunman who fired the fatal bullet did not commit a "civil rights" violation by killing Vicki Weaver.

"No wonder Americans are concerned about crime," said Dasbach. "They see criminals in our Armed Forces and in the FBI commit murder and walk away without punishment.

"But Esequiel Hernandez, Jr. and Vicki Weaver aren't the only victims here. The belief in American justice has also been mortally wounded. And the only cure is for the judicial system to put the killers of these innocent Americans on trial — even if they are in the FBI or the Marines."

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